

## WHY DO WE NEED REGULATION ?

The purpose of a nature reserve is to protect an exceptional and recognised natural heritage.

To find the right balance between heritage issues and human activities, regulations apply.

They serve as a safeguard and allow everyone to make the most of the site while preserving the fauna, flora, landscapes and natural environments. The agents of the nature reserves, the French Office of Biodiversity, the National Forestry Office and the National Gendarmerie, among others, are responsible for enforcing these regulations.



Dogs are not allowed, even on a lead, as they can harm ground-nesting birds and disturb wildlife and livestock. Only sheepdogs or rescue dogs may be admitted.



Bivouacking is tolerated from 7pm to 9am but it is forbidden to pitch a tent outside these hours or for several days.



In order to limit the high fire risk - especially in summer - damage to the flora and disturbance of the fauna, it is forbidden to make fires.



The flower allows the plant to reproduce, and it also provides valuable food for pollinating species. Cutting off a flower prevents new seeds from growing. Let everyone enjoy the beauty of the wild flowers.



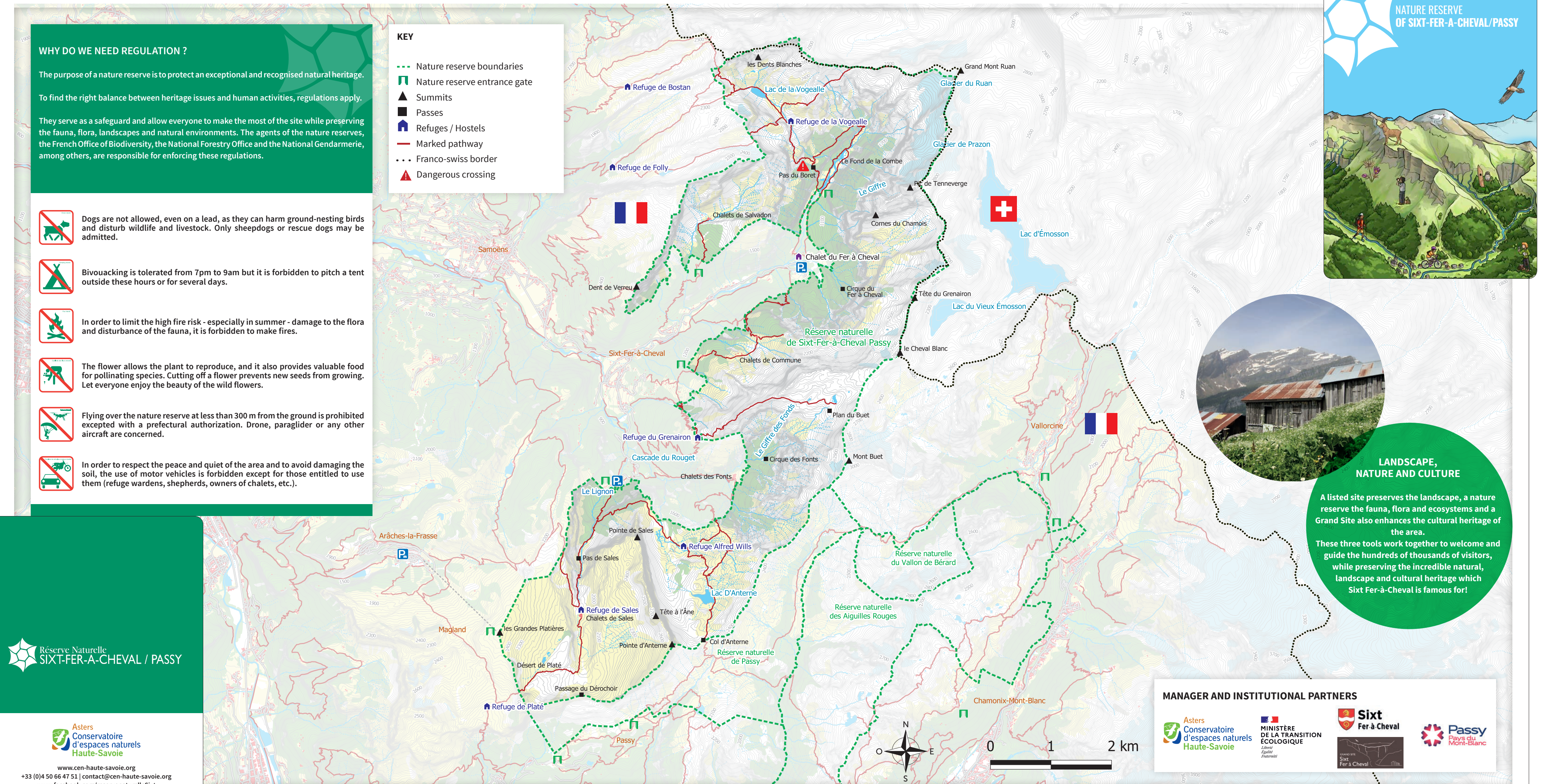
Flying over the nature reserve at less than 300 m from the ground is prohibited excepted with a prefectural authorization. Drone, paraglider or any other aircraft are concerned.



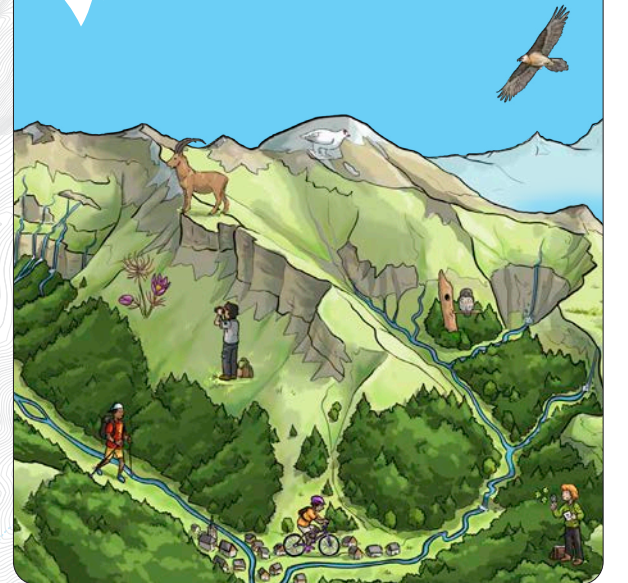
In order to respect the peace and quiet of the area and to avoid damaging the soil, the use of motor vehicles is forbidden except for those entitled to use them (refuge wardens, shepherds, owners of chalets, etc.).

## KEY

- Nature reserve boundaries
- Nature reserve entrance gate
- ▲ Summits
- Passes
- Refuges / Hostels
- Marked pathway
- ... Franco-swiss border
- ▲ Dangerous crossing



## NATURE RESERVE OF SIXT-FER-A-CHEVAL/PASSY



## LANDSCAPE, NATURE AND CULTURE

A listed site preserves the landscape, a nature reserve the fauna, flora and ecosystems and a Grand Site also enhances the cultural heritage of the area.

These three tools work together to welcome and guide the hundreds of thousands of visitors, while preserving the incredible natural, landscape and cultural heritage which Sixt Fer-à-Cheval is famous for!

 Réserve Naturelle  
SIXT-FER-A-CHEVAL / PASSY

 Asters  
Conservatoire  
d'espaces naturels  
Haute-Savoie

www.cen-haute-savoie.org  
+33 (0)4 50 66 47 51 | contact@cen-haute-savoie.org  
www.facebook.com/reservenaturelleSixt

## MANAGER AND INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

 Asters  
Conservatoire  
d'espaces naturels  
Haute-Savoie

 MINISTÈRE  
DE LA TRANSITION  
ÉCOLOGIQUE

 Sixt  
Fer-à-Cheval

 Passy  
Pays du  
Mont-Blanc



The nature reserve of Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval / Passy, located in the commune of Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval and Passy, is managed by Asters, the Haute-Savoie Conservatory of Natural Areas.

#### THE PURPOSE OF A NATURE RESERVE

##### KNOW

Science is a fundamental tool for better understanding the world around us and its fragility.  
The nature reserve is an open-air laboratory!

##### PROTECT

Specific regulations apply to each nature reserve. The manager ensures the protection of this area through environmental policing.

##### MANAGE

A project for the conservation and management of species and natural environments exists in this area, in search of a delicate balance between humans and nature.

##### SHARE

Loving, discovering, learning, respecting... this space is open to the public and takes visitors far beyond wonder..



#### HERITAGE OF THE NATURAL RESERVE

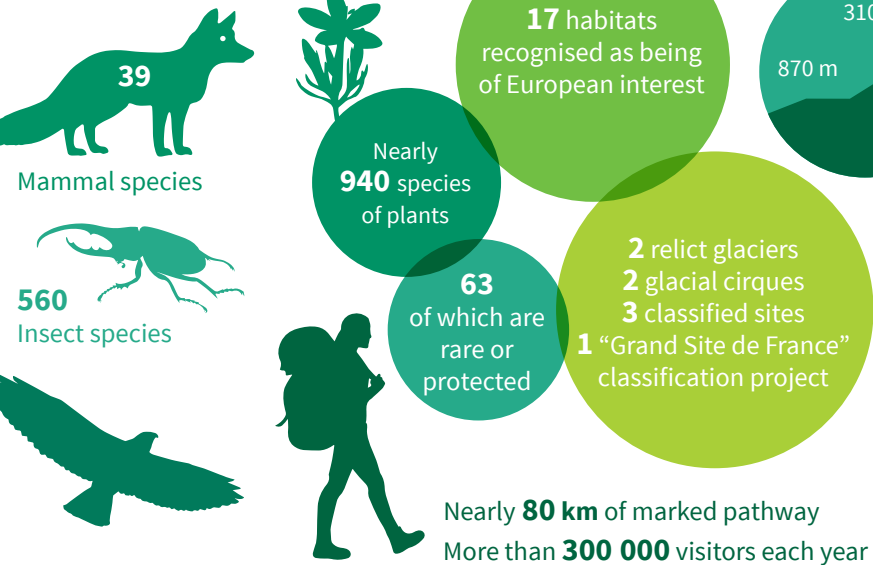
##### A HIGH AND HUMID LIMESTONE MASSIF

- 1** The high peaks and ridge lines form a barrier to clouds. Often snow-covered, the ridges form a receptacle for atmospheric disturbances, which is why it rains a lot in Sixt.
- 2** Glaciers, such as the Ruan, are present in the nature reserve. These glaciers and snowfields provide water reserves for the summer.
- 3** Resurgences and waterfalls are a special feature of the nature reserve. They're created by the shape of the relief and the presence of numerous torrents.
- 4** In some depressions water accumulates and forms **valuable and sensitive wetlands**. Frogs, newts and dragonflies are particularly happy here, even at higher altitudes.
- 5** The **lapiaz** of the **Platé** desert is the result of erosion. The flow of water has sculpted the relief, creating formations which are typical of limestone massifs: lapiaz but also caves, chasms or glacial cirques...

##### INVERTED VALLEY FLOOR, A REFUGE FOR SPECIES

- 6** The **Bearded Vulture** is a symbol of our mountains. Decimated at the beginning of the 20th century, it owes its comeback to the work of passionate and determined ornithologists. If you're lucky enough to see one, it's the result of the largest animal reintroduction programme in Europe! And don't worry, it's a scavenger which mainly feeds on bones.
- 7** The variety of environments provides favourable habitats for many species. Some, like the **pasqueflower**, can only be found in calcareous soils.
- 8** Many iconic alpine animals are present in Sixt, including **Marmots**. They live between rocks and scree, ideally in a place with a panoramic view, easy to watch over. They live as a family in a burrow with galleries and chambers lined with dry grass in which they set up their winter quarters to hibernate.
- 9** The **Ibex**, which is now protected, almost disappeared from the Alps due to hunting and poaching. Successive reintroductions have increased the size of the populations. You'll usually see them near large rocky ledges.
- 10** The **Rock Ptarmigan** lives at high altitude. It changes colour according to the season to blend in with its environment, and relies on its mimicry to escape predators. Climate change will greatly alter its habitat, making it an endangered species in the Alps.
- 11** The **Eurasian Pygmy Owl** is the smallest owl in Europe. It likes the forests of the nature reserve, which have remained fairly wild due to the relief, which makes them difficult to exploit. This small owl hunts at dawn and dusk because its vision is poor in complete darkness. It builds up reserves of food which it hides in anticipation of periods of scarcity.

#### KEY FIGURES



#### ACTIVITIES IN THE NATURE RESERVE

- A** The **alpine chalets** bear witness to a very ancient pastoral activity. Grouped in small hamlets, they were used in the summer to shelter shepherds and their families. They were also used as a milking parlour and for cheesemaking. Now they're mostly second homes.
- B** Mowing was an essential activity for the survival of people and livestock. In the past, the "race for grass" forced men to mow in very steep and sometimes dangerous areas.
- C** Even today, **many herds** spend the summer in the mountain pastures. They're often guarded by a shepherd and guard dogs. When approaching the herd, have the right reflexes: keep your distance, avoid sudden movements, keep walking without running. Don't hesitate to speak softly to the dogs so that they get used to and accept your presence.
- D** Hunting is regulated and allowed in some parts of the nature reserve.
- E** The beauty of the sites attracts many **mountain sports enthusiasts** (mountain biking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering, etc.). They have to comply with the regulations. Hikers are asked to stay on the paths. Climbers and skiers should limit disturbances to wildlife, especially in the winter. It is therefore advisable to find out all you can about any activity in the nature reserve.
- F** **Scientific monitoring** is carried out to understand ongoing developments. A scientific committee supports the nature reserve manager in measuring the effects of climate change, the evolution of species populations and understanding the functioning of high-altitude lakes.
- G** The **team of the Sixt Fer-à-Cheval / Passy nature reserve manager** regularly scours the area. Their tasks include scientific monitoring, restoration of natural environments and observation. The manager is also responsible for organising and welcoming the public. Every summer, eco-volunteers offer activities, outings and conferences to satisfy the curious.



#### FIND OUT MORE

[www.cen-haute-savoie.org](http://www.cen-haute-savoie.org)  
[rando.nature-haute-savoie.fr](http://rando.nature-haute-savoie.fr)  
[www.facebook.com/reservenaturelleSixt/](http://www.facebook.com/reservenaturelleSixt/)  
[www.haut-giffre.fr](http://www.haut-giffre.fr)  
[www.mairie-sixtferacheval.fr](http://www.mairie-sixtferacheval.fr)  
[www.grand-site-sixt.fr](http://www.grand-site-sixt.fr)

**The Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval nature reserve house :**  
Located in the heart of the village of Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval, this museum space welcomes (by reservation) schoolchildren who want to learn more about the nature reserve.  
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